

STATEMENT

BY

H.E. ILIR META,

PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA

**Mr. President of the Turkish Republic,
Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Heads of Delegations, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

This BSEC Summit offers me the opportunity to express on behalf of the newest Government among those participating in this regional Organization my opinion on the role and commitment of my country, one of the founding members of the Organization. I also take this opportunity to applaud the personal contribution of the Turkish President, His Excellency, Süleyman Demirel, for this warm reception offered to us in the gorgeous city of Istanbul.

The Albanian Government has highly valued the road followed by the Organization during these seven years of its existence and has therefore tried to be active in all its components. I share the opinion of my colleagues that much work has been done so far. The finalization of the institutional formation phase constitutes an important achievement. The approval of the Charter has transformed our Organization into a proper regional one.

Last month, the UN General Assembly gave observer status to BSEC Organization. From now on, our Organization is an equal partner in the family of international organizations.

The Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe is a clear example of a new and revolutionary stand, which presents the model of a coherent, tangible strategy towards achieving peace and lasting cooperation in the Balkans.

We all welcomed the invitation made to BSEC to offer its contribution to the implementation of the Stability Pact. Moreover, this invitation was another recognition of BSEC by the international community.

In this framework, the endorsement of the Platform for Cooperation between the BSEC and the EU is beyond any doubt another significant achievement. It will open new avenues to cooperation between both organizations. Its targets are in full conformity with the aims and objectives of the Stability Pact.

The finalization of the institutional and legal phase of the BSEC provides the necessary prerequisites to enter into the consolidation phase. I believe that I share the opinion of my colleagues when I say that the forthcoming phase should be the one of implementation of projects.

Hence, we consider the beginning of operations of the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank to be of primary importance for the Organization. We hope that the role of this Bank will increase steadily and that it will be involved in the financing of BSEC projects targeting countries of the region.

The Albanian Government is also committed to other sub-regional initiatives such as CEI, SECI, the Royaumont Process, etc. BSEC cooperation with such regional groupings is a process to rejoice at. Strong cooperation with such organizations is a milestone in the European integration process.

Distinguished Colleagues

Our regional cooperation is a long process. We should join efforts and make the best investment in our future. At the same time, we should always be cautious. The last Kosovo crisis revealed that stability and peace in our continent, and its prosperity are intricately linked with the stability and prosperity of all regions.

I am convinced that we all share the belief that development, democracy and peace are the main pillars of the transformation process in our region.

Thank you.

STATEMENT
BY
H.E. ROBERT KOCHARIAN,
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

Господин Председатель!
Уважаемые коллеги!
Дамы и господа!

Саммит стран-членов ЧЭС сегодня носит символический характер и проходит накануне завтрашнего саммита ОБСЕ. Наше участие в обоих форумах в известной степени отражает реалии современной Европы и свидетельствует о её способности объединять группы государств в достижении общих целей и интересов.

ЧЭС, являясь относительно молодой организацией, уже успела стать продуктивным механизмом сотрудничества в Европе. Об этом свидетельствуют нынешний институциональный уровень ЧЭС, круг вопросов, входящих в компетенцию этой Организации, а также активность её взаимодействия с другими международными организациями. Однако ЧЭС предстоит ещё долгий путь становления.

Нам предстоит совершенствовать правовые основы деятельности Организации. Необходимо всемерно поддерживать эффективные механизмы взаимодействия в рамках ЧЭС и посредством неё с другими региональными и европейскими организациями. В данном контексте мы положительно воспринимаем процесс расширения сотрудничества ЧЭС с Европейским Союзом, как наиболее развитым сообществом интегрированных государств.

Прогресс сотрудничества в рамках ЧЭС может быть обеспечен путём реализации экономически обоснованных и взаимовыгодных проектов, особенно в области транспорта и энергетики. Весьма важную роль в этих процессах имеет Черноморский Банк Торговли и Развития, успех которого зависит от тесного сотрудничества с другими международными финансовыми институтами.

Важное значение имеет также содействие Организацией развитию малого и среднего бизнеса, налаживания и расширения взаимовыгодного сотрудничества деловых кругов стран-членов ЧЭС. Осознавая что именно деловые круги способны эффективно реализовывать на практике задачи Организации, мы должны придать этому аспекту должное внимание.

Армения присоединяется к принимаемой сегодня Декларации, видя в ней отражение основных приоритетов деятельности ЧЭС на ближайшее будущее.

В заключение, хочу выразить благодарность господину Сулейману Демирелю, Президенту принимающей страны, за гостеприимство. Пользуясь случаем, хотел бы поблагодарить наших греческих коллег за плодотворную работу в период председательствования Греции в Организации. Одновременно хотел бы пожелать успехов Молдове в качестве следующей председательствующей страны.

Спасибо.

**Dear Mr. Chairman,
Esteemed Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Today's informal meeting of the BSEC Member States bears symbolic meaning in it as it takes place on the eve of tomorrow's OSCE Summit. Our participation in both fora reflects to a certain extent the realities of contemporary Europe and stands evidence of its capability to unite individual countries in the pursuit of common goals and interests.

BSEC, while a relatively young organization, has already become a productive mechanism of cooperation in Europe. The present institutional level of the BSEC, the range of issues dealt with by the Organization and its active interrelationship with other international organizations stand proof of it. However, the BSEC still has a long way to in its formation.

We should further develop the legal foundations for the activities of the Organization. It is necessary to support effective mechanisms of interactions within the BSEC, and through it with the other regional and European organizations. In this context, we appreciate the expanding cooperation of the BSEC with the European Union as the most advanced community of integrated nations.

The progress in cooperation within the BSEC can be achieved through implementation of economically viable and mutually beneficial projects, in particular in the fields of transport and energy. The Black Sea Trade and Development Bank has a particularly important role to play in these processes. Its success depends on its close cooperation with other international financial institutions.

Assistance from the Organization to the development of small and medium-sized businesses, the establishment and expansion of mutually beneficial cooperation among business communities of the BSEC Member States also bears significance. Aware of the fact that the business communities are indeed those who are capable to pursue in practice the objectives of the Organization, we should attach the required attention to this issue.

Armenia joins the Declaration to be adopted today as it reflects all the major priorities for the BSEC in the near future.

In conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude to H.E. Mr. Süleyman Demirel, President of the host country, for hospitality. I take this opportunity to thank our Greek colleagues for their productive work during the term of Chairmanship of Greece in the Organization. At the same time, I would like to wish every success to Moldova as the next Chairman-in-Office.

Thank you.

STATEMENT

BY

H.E. HEYDAR ALIYEV,

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

**Уважаемый господин Председатель,
Ваши Превосходительства,
Дамы и господа,**

Позвольте, прежде всего, выразить нашу скорбь и сочувствие братскому народу Турции, с достоинством и мужеством встретившим столь тяжёлое испытание – разрушительные землетрясения, принесшие многочисленные жертвы и потери.

Мы высоко оцениваем инициативу Турции по проведению саммита Черноморского Экономического Сотрудничества в Стамбуле – в городе, в котором было положено начало нашей Организации.

Нельзя не отметить определённые результаты деятельности Организации. Достигнут некоторый прогресс в реализации положений Декларации Ялтинского Саммита. В то же время, имеются значительные, пока ещё не использованные ресурсы для активизации ЧЭС. Надеюсь сегодняшняя встреча позволит наметить ориентиры дальнейшего развития сотрудничества между странами-членами ЧЭС с учётом сложившейся в регионе на пороге нового тысячелетия политико-экономической ситуации.

Для Азербайджана, как, думаю, и для государств-участников, первоочередной задачей является достижение мира, безопасности и стабильности в регионе ЧЭС. Семь лет существования нашей организации наглядно показали проблемы и трудности в достижении целей сотрудничества, закреплённых в Стамбульской Декларации 1992 года. Всем нам необходимо предпринять решительные меры с целью обеспечить мир и безопасность в регионе на основе добрососедских отношений государств–участников, что, в свою очередь, откроет широкие возможности для широкомасштабного экономического сотрудничества.

В этой связи хочу подчеркнуть актуальность проведения нашей встречи накануне Саммита ОБСЕ. Надеюсь, итоги завтрашнего Саммита откроют перспективы для достижения полноценного регионального сотрудничества.

В заключение выражаю благодарность Президенту Турецкой Республики Его Превосходительству господину Сулейману Демирелю и Правительству Турции за организацию этой встречи и за тот вклад, который вносит Турция в дело укрепления сотрудничества во имя достижения мира, безопасности и процветания в регионе ЧЭС.

Благодарю за внимание.

**Dear Mr. Chairman
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

We suffer and mourn deeply as the tragic and devastating earthquake took place in Turkey and claimed thousands of lives. We share the suffer of brotherly Turkish people and express our sincere condolences.

We highly appreciate the initiative of Turkey to hold the Summit of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation in Istanbul, the city where our Organization was founded.

Dear colleagues,

It is necessary to note certain results of the activities of the Organization. Some progress has been made in realization of provisions of the Declaration of the Yalta Summit.

At the same time, there are significant resources for the intensification of the BSEC activities which have not been used yet. I hope that today's meeting will allow us to outline landmarks for further development of cooperation among the Member Countries of the BSEC by taking into account the political and economic situation in the region at the doorsteps of the new millennium.

The first and the foremost task for Azerbaijan, and I believe for the other participating states as well, is to achieve peace, security and stability in the BSEC region. The seven-year experience of our Organization has vividly shown difficulties and problems to accomplish the goals of cooperation, laid down in Istanbul Declaration of 1992. We all need to take decisive measures in order to achieve peace and security in the region on the basis of good neighborly relations between member states, which in its turn, would create wide opportunities for large-scale economic cooperation.

In this respect, I would like to underline the importance of holding our meeting on the eve of the OSCE Summit. I hope that the results of tomorrow's Summit will create prospects for comprehensive regional cooperation.

In conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Süleyman Demirel, President of the Republic of Turkey and the Government of Turkey for arranging this meeting and for Turkey's contribution to strengthening cooperation in the name of peace, security and prosperity in the BSEC region.

Thank you for your attention.

STATEMENT

BY

H.E. PETAR STOYANOV,

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

**Dear President Demirel,
Presidents, Prime Ministers,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

I would like first to express the Bulgarian people's and my own deepest condolences to President Demirel and the people of Turkey for the victims of the latest earthquake. We stand by our neighbours in these hard times offering our solidarity and readiness to help.

I wish to give credit to President Demirel for the idea to hold our meeting here, in Istanbul, where more than seven years ago, the initiative for economic cooperation among the countries of the Black Sea region was launched, and to thank our hosts for their hospitality.

Today, a year and a half after signing the Charter of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation this initiative has evolved into a regional economic organization with its legal framework, qualified staff and international prestige. A testimony of this development has been the interest of other important countries and regions in cooperating with our Organization, as well as its observer status in the UN General Assembly, the endorsement of the "Programme for Cooperation between the Black Sea Economic Cooperation and the European Union and the invitation to the BSEC to participate in some areas of implementation of the Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have already made major steps forward in promoting Black Sea cooperation in transport and telecommunications; energy and the environment; mutual assistance in overcoming the effects of natural and man-made disasters and joint efforts in fighting organized crime, drug trafficking and terrorism. We rely a great deal on the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank. In the context of the efforts to improve the investment climate in the region, the Bank should play a key role for attracting strategic foreign investment and encouraging private capital in our countries to engage in joint projects.

I do not have enough time here to mention every promising area of cooperation among us. However, on the eve of the OSCE Summit I wish to emphasize on two strategic trends in the development of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, which, I believe, will define its image in the next century.

First, the need for an ever closer cooperation between the Black Sea Economic Cooperation and the European Union. This need stems from the strategic aspiration of most BSEC members after integration with the European structures and is fully in line with the ongoing pan-European processes. This is the context in which we see the efforts at promoting cooperation between the Black Sea and the Baltic regions, the focus of our recent discussions in Ukraine. It is also my perception of the continental aspects of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation.

Besides, our region has the geostrategic advantage of being located on one of the most promising transcontinental corridors, linking Europe with the countries of Central and East Asia via the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea. The project with the romantic name of "The Great Silk Road" is about to become one of the most gigantic projects of the next century - the TRASECA. Therefore our joint efforts to make the best of this geostrategic advantage of the Black Sea region are an issue for the present, as well as for the future. For, as the saying goes, "every road begins from a first step."

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The two points I have made here reflect the global trend of open regionalism. This is the way leading to the greater security and prosperity of this world. And I am sure this is the best way of utilizing the vast potential of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation and meeting the present and the future challenges before our region's development.

Thank you for your attention!

STATEMENT
BY
H.E. EDUARD SHEVARDNADZE,
PRESIDENT OF GEORGIA

**Господин Председатель,
Дорогие друзья,**

Хочу искренне поблагодарить Президента Демиреля за инициативу организации этой встречи. Турция, как автор идеи создания Организации и один из крупнейших и активнейших её членов – вновь явилась движущей силой дальнейшего углубления нашего сотрудничества.

Динамика протекающих в нашем регионе процессов не позволяет нам ждать созыва официального саммита для согласования наших позиций. Особую озабоченность вызывает то, что происходит на Северном Кавказе. Думаю, нашей совместной целью должно стать недопущение расширения военных действий, ибо это может привести к возникновению серьёзных препятствий в деле реализации осуществляемых и планируемых в регионе экономических проектов.

Практически все участвующие в них страны являются членами Организации, и разговор о них здесь полностью оправдан и целесообразен. Частые контакты между членами ЧЭС, в том числе на высшем уровне, порождают надежду на то, что Организация внесёт свой посильный вклад в дело стабилизации положения в ареале Чёрного моря и не оставит ни малейшего сомнения в безопасности и экономической выгоды глобальных проектов.

В рамках “Великого Шёлкового Пути” вскоре начнётся транспортировка через Кавказ неизмеримо большего объёма энергоносителей Каспийского бассейна. Будут возрастать грузопотоки и пассажирские перевозки. Уже налицо признаки резкого увеличения потока туристов, что для экономики нашей страны является немаловажным источником дохода. Всё это ставит на повестку дня необходимость более тесного и активного сотрудничества по вопросам региональной стабильности.

В условиях, когда крупные международные организации заняты различными горячими точками в мире и не всегда уделяют должное внимание делам Кавказа, одной из целей нашей Организации должна стать совместная ответственность за судьбу региона. Не поймите меня так, будто я призываю к возрастанию политической активности ЧЭС в ущерб экономической. Но, наверное, вы согласитесь со мной в том, что в условиях нарастающей угрозы стабильности следует задуматься и об этом.

Думаю, настало время, когда ЧЭС должен найти соответствующий баланс между экономическим сотрудничеством и региональной безопасностью, определить своё место в семье других региональных группировок и межправительственных организаций в новой европейской архитектуре XXI века. Эти вопросы имеют существенное значение, так как они могут обеспечить окончательный успех ЧЭС.

Многие страны нашей организации стремятся к поэтапной интеграции в Евросоюз. С учётом этого, огромное значение приобретают взаимосвязи между Евросоюзом и ЧЭС. Солидной правовой основой сотрудничества станет принятие Советом Министров Евросоюза «Платформы сотрудничества между ЧЭС и Евросоюзом», учреждённой Советом министров иностранных дел ЧЭС. Нам предстоит определить и разработать специфические и конкретные проекты сотрудничества с Евросоюзом.

Взаимосогласованные правовые основы дают новые возможности для принятия в рамках ЧЭС не только рекомендательных, но и обязательных решений и промедление на этом пути недопустимо. С будущего года представитель Грузии займёт должность генерального секретаря ЧЭС и сделает всё для дальнейшего повышения плодотворности её деятельности. Правительство Грузии окажет ему в этом полное содействие.

Дорогие друзья,

Прежде, чем завершить своё выступление, хочу сердечно поздравить с победой нашего общего друга Леонида Кучму. Уверен, что достойный выбор, сделанный народом Украины, в значительной мере будет способствовать ускорению процесса европейской интеграции, единству Европы, объединению мирового сообщества на основе демократических, общечеловеческих идеалов.

Позвольте на этом завершить своё выступление и проститься с Вами лишь до завтра. Надеюсь, завтрашний саммит ОБСЕ в значительной степени определит лучшее будущее евроатлантического пространства в XXI веке.

Благодарю.

**Mr. Chairman,
Dear Friends,**

Let me extend my sincere thanks to President. Demirel for bringing us together for this Meeting. As the initiator of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, and one of our Organization's largest and most active members, Turkey has proven once again to be a driving force behind deepening the cooperation among us.

Given the dynamics of processes in our region, we can hardly effort to wait until an official summit is convened to determine the common ground of our positions. The developments in the North Caucasus are of our particular concern today. I believe we must make it our common goal not to allow an expansion of hostilities, since the economic projects in the region, both those underway and those planned for the future, could be seriously impeded.

Virtually all countries participating in these projects are members of this Organization, therefore discussing them here is both justified and timely. The intensifying contacts between the BSEC members, including those at the highest level, give us hope that the Organization will make its due contribution to the stability in the Black Sea area and will not permit any shadow of doubt regardless of how small, to be cast on the safety and economic viability of these globally important projects.

Soon, the transportation of huge volumes of Caspian hydrocarbons via the Caucasus will begin within the framework of the New Silk Road. The movement of cargo and people will increasingly grow. Already we see signs in Georgia of dramatic growth in tourism, which is an important source of income for our country. All this necessitates closer and more active cooperation in the matters of regional stability.

Under conditions when major international organizations are preoccupied with hot spots across the globe, they do not always give due attention to the affairs of the Caucasus. This is why shared responsibility over the fate of the region should become one of our principal goals in this Organization. Please do not interpret my words as a call for expanding the political dimension of BSEC at the cost of its economic activities. But you will perhaps concur that an increasing threat to the regional stability prompts us to think in this direction as well.

Perhaps the time is right for BSEC to strike an appropriate balance between economic cooperation and cooperation on regional security, and determine its place within the family of other regional alliances and intergovernmental organizations in the new European architecture of the 21st century.

Many BSEC members aspire to a step by step integration into the European Union. With this in mind, the relations between the BSEC and the EU acquire a special significance. The establishment by the EU Council of Ministers of the BSEC-EU Platform for Cooperation has already been approved by the BSEC Council of Foreign Ministers will provide a solid legal foundation for these relations. In this respect, BSEC is to identify and develop specific projects for collaboration within the European Union.

The mutually agreed (upon) legal frames provide us with an opportunity to adopt within the framework of BSEC not only recommendations, but also binding decisions. Delay in this respect is inadmissible. Next year, a representative from Georgia will assume the position of the BSEC Secretary General. This individual will spare no effort to ensure that the Organization's activities are effective and fruitful. The Georgian Government will give him full support and help.

Before I conclude, I want to cordially congratulate our friend Leonid Kuchma on his victory in the Presidential elections. I am sure that this wise choice on the part of the Ukrainian people will significantly facilitate the process of European integration, contribute to the unity of Europe and that of the world community on the basis of democratic, universal ideals.

With this, I conclude my remarks – although I am not saying goodbye. Tomorrow we will again discuss matters critical to us all. I hope that tomorrow's forum will largely contribute to a better future for the Euro-Atlantic space in the 21st century.

STATEMENT
BY
H.E. COSTAS SIMITIS,
PRIME MINISTER OF THE HELLENIC REPUBLIC

**Mr. Chairman,
Dear Colleagues and Friends,**

I would first like to express my deep sorrow to President Demirel for the victims of the earthquakes in Turkey.

It is with great pleasure we participate today in this Summit Meeting and have the opportunity to stress the importance Greece attributes to the development and successful function of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization.

We are very pleased that with the recent entry into force of our Charter, the Organization has passed from the stage of institutional infancy into the one of maturity. Now we must act and it is necessary to concentrate on the effective functioning of the existing institutional mechanism. To this effect particular attention has to be paid to the Working Groups which constitute the BSEC's back bone and in this direction to develop every effort to enhance the practical value added to their work.

A second point I want to stress is the development of the BSEC-EU relations. We have lent a strong support to this development and we believe in a realistic and mutually beneficial cooperation. We favored the idea of the elaboration of sectoral studies with the European Commission's assistance on projects of common interests. These projects could be included in the EU's programs. But in order to be included we must elaborate on them.

My third point is the Stability Pact. The Stability Pact for the Balkans is still a fantome but soon it will begin to function and we have in Thessaloniki expressed our will, our satisfaction that we can participate in the implementation of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe. We should do this. We think that there are possibilities for all Black Sea countries if the Stability Pact begins to function. I want also to stress that we have now a tool. This is the Bank. The Bank is very important. The implementation of concrete projects for cooperation should be the core of its activities.

Finally I want to subscribe gladly to the Istanbul Declaration and we express Greece's commitment to spare no effort in the promotion of the BSEC aspirations.

Thank you.

STATEMENT

BY

H.E. PETRU LUCINSCHI,

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

**Stimate Domnule Președinte,
Stimați șefi ai delegațiilor,
Onorată asistență,**

Am o deosebită plăcere de a mă adresa Dumneavoastră cu ocazia acestei reuniuni la nivel înalt a Cooperării Economice a Mării Negre. Folosesc această oportunitate pentru a saluta reprezentanții statelor membre, ai țărilor cu statut de observator la CEMN, precum și oaspeții care reprezintă organizațiile internaționale.

De la început vreau să-i mulțumesc în mod special Președintelui Turciei domnului Suleyman Demirel pentru generozitatea cu care ne-a oferit această posibilitate de a ne reuni din nou și de a efectua un schimb de opinii. Turcia a stat la originea creării CEMN, și noi apreciem înalt rolul Turciei și personal al domnului președinte Demirel la consolidarea organizației noastre.

**Doamnelor și domnilor,
Stimați colegi,**

Cred că putem fi cu toții de acord, că la etapa actuală CEMN este un cadru favorabil pentru colaborare multilaterală a statelor din bazinul Mării Negre. În perioada de timp ce s-a scurs de la întâlnirea noastră de la Yalta, Cooperarea Economică a Mării Negre a căpătat noi valențe și dimensiuni. Acest lucru este confirmat prin ratificarea de către parlamentele naționale a Cartei Organizației CEMN și intrarea ei în vigoare, începutul activității operaționale a Băncii Mării Negre pentru Comerț și Dezvoltare. Un alt exemplu elocvent în acest sens este acordarea CEMN statutului de observator în cadrul Adunării Generale a ONU.

Vorbind despre rolul CEMN, aș vrea să mă opresc în mod special asupra colaborării cu alte organisme internaționale, ca factor de consolidare a Organizației noastre.

Luând în considerare tendința statelor noastre spre integrare în structurile europene, considerăm drept actuală decizia Consiliului de Miniștri de la Thessaloniki cu privire la colaborarea între CEMN și UE, și încurajăm activitatea comună în acest sens. Este foarte bună și productivă ideea despre elaborarea și implementarea unor proiecte mari, care să prezinte interes atât pentru statele-membre ale CEMN, cât și ale Uniunii Europene. Noi considerăm că ar putea prezenta un interes deosebit implementarea unui proiect comun, care ar opera cu generarea luminii electrice și transportarea ei și la care ar participa Rusia, Ucraina, Republica Moldova, România, Bulgaria și Turcia. Aș vrea să menționez, că colaborarea dintre CEMN și Comisia Economică ONU pentru Europa de asemenea are drept obiectiv final integrarea europeană. Într-adevăr, adaptarea cu asistența CEE-ONU a legislațiilor naționale la cea comunitară este un aspect extrem de important și o etapă absolut necesară a integrării. Sînt convins că există și alte posibilități de cooperare între CEMN și această organizație importantă, dar pentru valorificarea lor trebuie să procedăm tot astfel cum s-a procedat și în cazul Uniunii Europene: să elaborăm o platformă, sau o

strategie de colaborare. Aș mai spune că trebuie să procedăm așa cum se procedează acum în toate structurile regionale și subregionale europene, inclusiv și CEMN, care elaborează o poziție specială în vederea implicării în activitățile Pactului de Stabilitate în Europa de Sud-Est.

Concluzia este că nu e suficient să avem o viziune pentru relațiile cu Uniunea Europeană, ci avem nevoie și de strategie elaborată în vederea colaborării eficiente cu alte organisme internaționale – Inițiativa Central Europeană, Inițiativa de Cooperare în Europa de Sud-Est etc. Cred că dacă vom reuși acest lucru, vom fi în stare să ne concentrăm cu o mult mai mare eficiență asupra unuia din obiectivele formulate anterior – crearea unei zone de comerț liber în regiunea Mării Negre. Transpunerea cooperării între statele noastre, precum și a colaborării CEMN cu alte organisme internaționale pe bazele unei strategii fundamentate ne va permite să extindem colaborarea eficientă și în alte domenii – științific, cultural, umanitar etc.

Doamnelor și domnilor,

Conform regulamentului în vigoare, Republica Moldova deține în prezent Președinția în cadrul CEMN. Ideile formulate de mine mai sus reprezintă prioritățile Republicii Moldova atît pentru perioada deținerii președinției la CEMN, ci și pentru o colaborare pe viitor în cadrul Organizației. O altă prioritate a noastră va fi contribuția cît mai pleneră a CEMN la implementarea Pactului de Stabilitate.

Bineînțeles însă că programul Președinției Republicii Moldova, care a fost remis statelor membre, include și multe alte activități, printre care credem că un aspect esențial trebuie să devină trecerea de la elaborarea proiectelor comune la implementarea lor. Noi contăm pe spiritul tradițional de cooperare ce domnește în cadrul CEMN și solicităm sprijinul statelor membre în vederea realizării acestui program.

Pornind de la faptul că respectarea intereselor fiecărui stat precum și luarea în considerare a intereselor comune este o condiție indispensabilă a unei cooperări rezultative, țara noastră va depune eforturi susținute pentru realizarea obiectivelor propuse.

Astăzi vom adopta Declarația Reuniunii noastre în care sînt menționate principalele direcții de activitate și obiective ale Organizației CEMN. Apreciem îndeosebi faptul că cooperarea noastră, preponderent economică este orientată mai ales spre domenii care țin însăși de esența progresului economic și social, obiectivul principal rămînînd întărirea păcii și securității în regiunea Mării Negre prin aprofundarea cooperării economice multilaterale a statelor membre, cu sprijinul activ al comunității internaționale.

În încheiere aș dori să-mi exprim speranța că prin realizarea deciziilor pe care le vom lua astăzi vom contribui la consolidarea climatului de înțelegere și cooperare în această zonă a Europei.

Vă mulțumesc pentru atenție.

Dear Mr. President,

**Dear Heads of Delegations,
Distinguished Audience,**

It is my special pleasure to address You on the occasion of this high level meeting of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation. I avail myself of this opportunity to greet the representatives of the member states, of the countries with an observer status within BSEC, as well as the guests representing international organisations.

I would like to begin by particularly thanking the President of Turkey, Mr. Süleyman Demirel for his generosity of offering us the possibility to meet again and to exchange opinions. Turkey has been at the origins of the foundation of BSEC, and we highly appreciate its role and the personal contribution of President Demirel to the consolidation of our organisation.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear Colleagues,**

I think we could all agree that presently BSEC is a favourable framework for multilateral cooperation between the Black Sea countries. In the period since our meeting in Yalta, the Black Sea Economic Cooperation gathered new valences and dimensions. This is confirmed through the ratification by the national parliaments of the BSEC Organisation Charter and its entering into force, the beginning of the operational activity of the Black Sea Bank for Trade and Development. Another eloquent example in this sense is the observer status of BSEC within the UN General Assembly.

Speaking about the role of BSEC, I would like to insist especially on the cooperation with other international bodies, as a consolidation factor of our Organisation.

Taking into account the desire of our states to integrate in the European structures, we consider the decision of the Thessaloniki Council of Ministers concerning cooperation between BSEC and EU as an actual one. The idea of elaborating and implementing certain big projects which would present interest not only for Black Sea countries, but for EU states as well, is a very good and productive one. We consider that the common implementation of a project dealing with electric power generation and transportation, which could include Russia, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey, could present a special interest. I would like to mention that the cooperation between BSEC and the UN Economic Commission for Europe has the European integration as its final objective as well. It is true that the adaptation of national legislation to the *acquis communautaire* with the assistance of UN/ECE is an extremely important aspect and an absolutely necessary stage of integration. I am convinced that there are other opportunities of cooperation between BSEC and this important organisation, but in order to make utmost use of them we need to proceed as we have with the EU: elaborate a platform or a strategy of cooperation. I would add that we have to proceed according to the experience of all regional and sub-regional European structures, including BSEC,

which elaborate a special position concerning involvement in the activities of the South-East European Stability Pact.

The conclusion is that it is not sufficient to have just a concept of the relations with the EU, but we also need to elaborate a strategy of efficient cooperation with other international organisations - Central European Initiative, South-East European Cooperation Initiative etc. I think that if we fulfil this, we will be able to concentrate much more efficiently on one of the previously formulated objective - creating a Free Trade zone in the Black Sea region. The implementation of the cooperation between our states and of the cooperation between BSEC and other international bodies on bases of a fundamental strategy will allow us to extend the cooperation to other fields as well - scientific, cultural humanitarian etc., and to make it more efficient.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

According to the current regulation, the Republic of Moldova is now presiding the BSEC. The ideas I formulated above represent priorities for the Republic of Moldova both during its presidency of BSEC and for the future cooperation within the Organisation. Another priority for us will be a most plenary contribution of BSEC to the implementation of the Stability Pact.

It is obvious that the programme of the Republic of Moldova's presidency, forwarded to the member states, includes a series of other activities, and we think that the transition from drafting common projects to implementing them should occupy a key place. We count on the traditional spirit of cooperation within BSEC and we request the support of the member states with a view to achieve these objectives.

Taking into account the fact that the respect of each state's interests and the consideration of common interests is an indispensable condition for a productive cooperation, our country will undertake sustained efforts in order to achieve the targeted objectives.

Today we will adopt the Declaration of our meeting where the main orientations of our activities and the objectives of the BSEC Organisation are stipulated. We give a special appreciation to the fact that our cooperation, preponderantly economic, is oriented mostly to areas that are directly connected with the essence of economic and social progress, the main purpose remaining to be the consolidation of peace and security in the Black Sea region through strengthening multilateral economic cooperation of the member states with the active support of the international community.

Finally I would like to express my hope that by achieving today's decisions we will contribute to the consolidation of the climate of understanding and cooperation in this area of Europe.

Thank you for your attention.

STATEMENT
BY
H.E. EMIL CONSTANTINESCU,
PRESIDENT OF ROMANIA

**Dear Chiefs of State and Government,
Honoured audience,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I wish to salute from the very beginning the initiative of organizing here, in Istanbul, the informal Summit of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization. The significance of our presence within this framework is tightening the relationships between regional cooperation organizations and strengthening the edifice of security on our continent.

I congratulate on this occasion the distinguished statesman and friend, the President of the Republic of Turkey, His Excellency Mr. Süleyman Demirel, for the initiative of organizing this reunion in the eve of the OSCE Summit. I sincerely regret that the host country now has to face again the dramatic consequences of a natural catastrophe, and I kindly ask President Demirel to receive the expression of our profound compassion. Yet, even more so, I have to take notice of the fact that, despite this difficult situation, the hospitality we were welcomed with, this time anew, fully deserves our gratitude.

The balance of the BSEC activity so far is giving us hope. This structure for regional cooperation has proved to be an important element of our endeavours for establishing a climate of good neighborhood, stability and cooperation. The BSEC has designed a specific presence on the international level. It is notable in this respect that, starting with 8 October 1999, it has acquired the status of a UN Observer.

By participating in the round tables 2 and 3 within the Stability Pact in South-East Europe, the BSEC will prove its call to contribute, in cooperation with other structures, in designing the future of the region. This position obliges us to consider the specific message the BSEC can promote within this framework.

The idea that we can strongly assert through the BSEC is, in my opinion, the indispensable character of economic cooperation in ensuring stability, security and good neighborhood between states and peoples. In the absence of prosperity, democratic institutions may well remain fragile. Material distress and poverty create a climate, favourable to propagating extremist and nationalist discourses, speeches of nationalism intolerance, tensions and conflicts. We can endlessly discuss on not observing human rights and rights of minorities, but we will never be able to achieve progress in this respect, lest a sound economic dynamic should be secured and economic growth should be created.

At the same time, experience proves that government assistance is not the most efficient path to overcoming economic underdevelopment, but creating favorable conditions for business within the system of a free market. It is not assistance that countries in the region need in the first instance, but opening up the markets, encouragement of investments, consolidation of economic freedom. Regional economic integration is capable to improve the activity on our markets for foreign investors. It contributes, just as well, to the consolidation of cooperation and good neighborhood climate and it constitutes a component of efforts for European integration, and not a substitute of the latter.

Dear Colleagues,

Starting on 1 November 1999, Romania has become part of the BSEC Troika, alongside Greece and the Republic of Moldova. In this capacity, my country has got enhanced responsibilities in supporting the process of structuring the organization and achieving our common projects. We are fully aware of these responsibilities and we hope to finalize them on the ground of privileged relationships with the Republic of Moldova and Greece, as well as due to the support of all other Member States.

We hope that the OSCE Summit on 18 and 19 November will adopt the decision of designating Romania to be chairman-in-office of the Organization in 2001. If this would be so Romania will become part of the OSCE Troika ever since the beginning of the year 2000. Romania will act in this capacity for establishing close relationships between the BSEC and the OSCE in matters of regional interest. Correlating the programs of our Organization with OSCE actions within the region of the Black Sea can contribute to a better management in both directions. Just the same, the clear designation of complementarity between the BSEC and other forms of regional cooperation – the Central European Initiative, the South East European Initiative, SECI, the Mediterranean Initiative, the South East European Cooperation Process – SEECP, the Royaumont Process and Stability Pact in South East Europe – will contribute to focusing our actions on precise objectives of maximum efficiency.

Distinguished audience,

Romania will grant from now on, just as well, a special attention to participating in BSEC activities and projects. We are convinced that this organization can specifically contribute to promoting cooperation, good neighborhood and the European spirit. I am convinced that any investment in development programs and projects within the area of the Black Sea represent a good use of our millennial traditions in cooperation and that they also mean an investment in the future of stability, security and peace throughout the European continent.

Thank you.

STATEMENT

BY

H.E. SERGEI K. SHOIGU,

HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,

MINISTER FOR EMERGENCIES AND DISASTER RELIEF

Уважаемый господин Председатель,

Уважаемые главы государств и правительств стран Организации Черноморского Экономического Сотрудничества,

Уверен, что выражу мнение всех собравшихся в этом зале, если начну выступление со слов глубокого соболезнования, которое высказывает Россия, да и все страны ЧЭС, в связи с постигшим Турцию стихийным бедствием.

Во второй раз Турция проводит у себя черноморский саммит. Семь лет отделяют нас от первой встречи глав государств и правительств стран ЧЭС в Стамбуле. Все эти годы характеризовались углублением черноморского процесса, наполнением его весомым материальным содержанием. Диапазон сотрудничества пополнился новыми областями взаимодействия. В свете этого деятельность Организации Черноморского Экономического Сотрудничества приобретает сейчас новую динамику, её роль и интерес к ней постоянно возрастают. Это означает, что наши страны являются не сторонними наблюдателями, а реальными участниками процессов формирования новой европейской архитектуры без разделительных линий.

Вместе с тем, нужно сказать правду: результаты пока скромны на фоне потенциальных возможностей, которыми обладают государства-члены в целом и приграничные регионы наших стран. Следовательно нам предстоит более интенсивно вести работу на ключевых направлениях развития ЧЭС для того, чтобы перевести жизнь новой Организации в режим практических дел и осуществления совместных проектов.

Как нам представляется, на первом этапе приоритетное значение должны иметь проекты, связанные с реальным сектором экономики и способные давать отдачу уже в самое ближайшее время, стимулируя одновременно внутренние реформы и интеграцию экономик стран региона в международную систему разделения труда.

В этом контексте мы высоко ценим тот факт, что благодаря усилиям государств-членов удалось ускорить начало операционной деятельности Черноморского Банка Торговли и Развития (ЧБТР).

Россия готова и дальше содействовать успешному функционированию ЧБТР и тесно взаимодействовать с другими государствами-учредителями этого Банка по приоритетным инвестиционным проектам в регионе.

Особое внимание мы уделяем проекту объединения энергетических систем стран ЧЭС. Год тому назад наши страны подписали совместный Меморандум по этому важному вопросу. Предварительные исследования специалистов показали, что реализация данного проекта, несмотря на его масштабность, не будет сопряжена с большими затратами.

На наш взгляд, государства-члены ЧЭС и Европейский Союз могли бы ко взаимной выгоде друг друга сотрудничать на этом направлении.

Хотел бы также подчеркнуть то большое внимание, которое мы уделяем конкретным аспектам реализации межправительственного Соглашения с взаимодействии стран ЧЭС в ликвидации последствий стихийных бедствий и техногенных аварий. Этот документ с большим гуманитарным зарядом позволяет компетентным специалистам своевременно приходить на помощь нуждающемуся соседу, сократить время на преодоление таможенных и пограничных барьеров. Это было доказано на практике в ходе участия спасательных групп МЧС России в ликвидации последствий трагического землетрясения в Турции и тушении лесных пожаров в Греции в августе-сентябре с.г.

В целях лучшей координации операций по оказанию чрезвычайной помощи, а также интеграции сил и средств компетентных служб стран региона российская сторона предлагает создать Черноморский Спасательный Центр на базе инфраструктуры МЧС России в Геленджике.

Крайне актуальной темой является также налаживание более тесного сотрудничества между правоохранительными органами государств-членов ЧЭС. Министры внутренних дел наших стран уже подписали Соглашение в этой области. Российская сторона будет на практике способствовать быстрому созданию действенного механизма по реализации в полном объеме положений упомянутого Соглашения.

Уважаемые главы государств и правительств,

Динамика черноморского взаимодействия немыслима в отрыве от общеевропейских процессов. Но и развитие в Европе во многом определяется ситуацией в регионах, её составляющих. Недавние драматические события на Юге Европы подтверждают – нужны устойчивые региональные модели развития. По нашему убеждению, ЧЭС представляет собой работоспособную и перспективную модель в этой области.

Спасибо.

**Dear Mr. Chairman,
Dear Heads of State or Government of the countries of the Black Sea Economic
Cooperation Organization,**

I am sure that I will express the emotions of all those present if I start with expressing Russia's and all BSEC countries' sincere condolences to Turkey affected by the natural disasters.

It is the second time that Turkey is hosting a BSEC Summit. Seven years have passed since the first Istanbul Meeting of the BSEC Heads of State or Government. All those years were characterized by strengthening of the Black Sea process and fleshing it out. The scope of cooperation was extended to include new spheres of interaction. In this context, the BSEC activities are now assuming new dynamics with its role and interest towards it constantly growing. This means that our countries are no detached onlookers but real participants in the formation of a new European architecture without dividing lines.

Still, the truth needs to be said: the results are modest so far as compared to the potentials of our Member States as a whole and of their border regions. Consequently, we are bound to intensify the work in the main areas of the BSEC development so as to enable the new Organization to perform practical deeds and joint projects.

As we see it, at the first stage priority should be given to projects in the material sector of economy which can start repaying shortly while stimulating internal reforms and integration of the regional economies into the international labour division system.

In this context, we highly appreciate the fact that thanks to the efforts of the Member States we were able to speed up the beginning of the operational activity of the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank (BSTDB).

Russia is ready to continue promoting the successful functioning of the BSTDB and closely cooperating with other founding states of the Bank in the region's priority investment projects.

We pay special attention to the project of integrating the BSEC countries' power systems. A year ago our countries signed a joint Memorandum on this important issue. A preliminary expert analysis showed that the realization of this project would not be costly in spite of its scale. We believe that the BSEC Member States and the European Union could benefit from cooperation in this area.

I would also like to stress that we pay great attention to the practical aspects of the implementation of the Agreement among the Participating States of the BSEC on Collaboration in Emergency Assistance and Emergency Response to Natural and Man-made Disasters. This document with a humanitarian charge makes it possible for competent experts to help a neighbour in need through customs and frontier barriers faster. It did work in practice when rescue teams from the Russian Ministry for

Emergencies and Disaster Relief took part in removing the consequences of the tragic earthquake in Turkey and in fighting the Forest fires in Greece last August – September.

For better coordination of relief operations and integration of the capacities of regional competent services, the Russian side suggests creating a Black Sea Rescue Center based on the infrastructure of the Russian Ministry for Emergencies and Disaster Relief in Gelendzhick.

Further promotion of cooperation among law enforcement authorities of the BSEC Member States is an extremely urgent topic as well. Interior ministers of our countries have already signed an Agreement in this sphere. The Russian side will promote in practice prompt creation of an effective mechanism for the full-scale realization of the said Agreement.

Dear Heads of State or Government,

The dynamics of Black Sea cooperation is an integral part of the pan-European processes. But Development in Europe is also greatly influenced by the situation in its regions. Recent dramatic events in the South of Europe corroborate the need for sustainable regional models of development. We believe that BSEC is an effective and promising model in this sphere.

Thank you.

OPENING STATEMENT
BY
H.E. SÜLEYMAN DEMİREL,
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

**Mr. Chairman,
Honorable Heads of State,
Honorable Heads of Government,
Distinguished Delegates,**

It is a great pleasure to open the meeting of the fellow Heads of State or Government of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC). This Meeting is taking place at the very heart of our Organization. This is the building which hosts the BSEC Permanent International Secretariat with a beautiful view of the Bosphorus that connects the Black Sea with the rest of the world.

I would like to take this opportunity to express, on behalf of the Turkish people, our heartfelt thanks to the BSEC Member States for the solidarity and support shown by them in the relief efforts following the recent earthquakes that devastated an important region of Western Turkey.

Our Organization has a vital mission. This mission is to act as a vital and vibrant link between Europe and Asia; between the Caspian, Black Sea and Mediterranean basins. At the dawn of a new century, these seas that once divided our peoples apart are embracing one another again through new cooperation mechanisms such as the BSEC.

Two momentous developments in this respect clearly stood out recently. The first was the signing of the Black Sea cooperation Charter in Yalta, Ukraine, on 5 June 1998. With this step the BSEC will now better deal with the task of creating a free trade area in the Black Sea basin. This will also contribute to the future European Common Economic Zone. It was not any easy journey that brought us all the way from Yalta of 1945 to Yalta of 1998. Since the world of Yalta 1945 that divided us is now history, we have a chance to build a Black Sea region undivided, democratic, prosperous, and at peace.

The second major event for the future of Eurasia and the Black Sea region, was the Silk Road Summit which was convened in Baku on 7 September 1998 with the participation of 34 countries. It was a golden occasion displaying the international recognition of the new opportunities that exist in Eurasia and the BSEC region for peace, cooperation and prosperity. Crucial joint projects that constitute the infrastructure of the reemerging Silk Road are already being built within the BSEC area as integral parts of the Black Sea Ring Corridor. Today, ancient Silk Road is not only reappearing, but is also bringing new opportunities, commercial, economic, cultural and political, to the nations of the countries involved. As the BSEC we should seize this historic opportunity.

Mr. Chairman,

In our wider region, ethnic cleansing, first in Bosnia-Herzegovina, then in Kosovo, has been stopped thanks to the resolute stand and effective intervention of the international community. Furthermore, the international community has been quick to establish such formations as the Stability Pact and the South East European Cooperative Initiative. These formations aim to promote peace, stability and prosperity in the Balkans by achieving the much needed reconstruction and rehabilitation. The BSEC is looking forward to working in close collaboration with these new initiatives.

On the other hand, building lasting peace in the Caucasus on the basis of international legitimacy remains crucial for reaching the goals of the BSEC. Undoubtedly, the strengthening of the BSEC will generate stability and promote democracy in our wider region.

Mr. Chairman,

The promotion of intra-regional trade and investment in economic and social infrastructures are vital for fostering the overall economic development of the whole BSEC region. In this respect, we welcome the launching of the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank since last June. Now it falls to all member countries to give their financial support to the Bank to be able to realize our common objectives.

Regarding our regional economic cooperation, I would like to underline the leading role that our private sectors can be expected to play in expanding and diversifying this cooperation. Therefore, the creation in our member countries of a favourable economic, commercial, industrial, fiscal and legal environment to facilitate the activities of our private sectors remains crucial. As the host country of the BSEC Business Council, we will continue to lend our strong support for more private sector involvement in all of our economic cooperation activities.

With its Charter and other related documents, its Parliamentary Assembly, the Business Council, the Bank and the International Center for Black Sea Studies as well as other related organs, the BSEC has completed its formative stages and has become a full-fledged regional organization. It is the responsibility of each and every BSEC Member State now to take up the challenge and work together in this well-designed and well-developed cooperative scheme.

At this juncture, I would like to stress the positive effect of regional economic cooperation on the OSCE process as a whole and its security element in particular. It is acknowledged by the OSCE that sub regional cooperation has become an important factor to enhance security across the OSCE area. In this respect, the contribution of the BSEC should be a source of pride for all of us.

Mr. Chairman,

Terrorism is one area where we should strengthen our cooperation. Terrorism is a threat to the well-being and stability of the civilized world. According to the international law, it cannot and should not be justified under any circumstances. The UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on 18 October 1999, which establishes the guidelines for the fight of the international community against terrorism. The BSEC countries should draw on this resolution and develop bilateral or multilateral cooperation schemes based on their specific needs and conditions. The Member States of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation has successfully concluded an Agreement on “*Cooperation in Combating Crime, in Particular in its Organized Forms*”. I welcome the efforts of BSEC to create a mechanism for the implementation of this Agreement.

Mr. Chairman,

Before concluding my remarks, I extend my congratulations to the Greek authorities for having conducted in the best possible manner the Chairmanship of the BSEC during the past six months which brought about fruitful results.

I am convinced that the cooperation within the BSEC will be strengthened during the current Chairmanship of Moldova which took over from Greece recently.

Finally, I wish to thank the Secretary General of the BSEC, Ambassador Vassil Baytchev, for his efforts to ensure the success of the BSEC and congratulate our upcoming Secretary General, Mr. Valery Chechelashvili on his appointment. I would also like to thank the outgoing Deputy Secretaries General Ambassador Nurver Nureş, Mr. Alexei Nistrean and Mr. Shamil Aleskerov for their most effective services to the Organization.

Thank you.

STATEMENT
BY
H.E. LEONID KUCHMA,
PRESIDENT OF UKRAINE

Шановний пане Голово!
Шановні колеги!
Пані і панове!

Дозвольте насамперед висловити глибоке співчуття рідним і близьким жертв землетрусу, який стався в Туреччині 12 листопада, побажати якнайшвидшого одужання пораненим.

На долю цієї країни випали суворі випробування за останні місяці. Високої оцінки і поваги заслуговує мужність народу Туреччини, її керівництва, яке за таких, без перебільшення надзвичайних умов проводить два важливі саміти.

Приєднуюсь до слів вдячності шановному Президентові Демірелю за ініціативу проведення сьогоднішньої зустрічі. Ми маємо добру нагоду обговорити нинішній стан співпраці в рамках ОЧЕС, визначити пріоритети на наступне тисячоліття.

Минуло трохи більше року, відколи в Ялті було підписано Статут нашої Організації. Можна з приємністю констатувати, що за цей короткий час вона стала повноправним суб'єктом міжнародних відносин, впливовим чинником регіональних процесів. Це переконливо засвідчило надання ОЧЕС статусу спостерігача в Організації Об'єднаних Націй.

Очевидним є і її вплив на сучасні глобальні інтеграційні процеси. А водночас зростає і наша відповідальність за ситуацію не лише у своєму регіоні, а й на всьому європейському континенті.

Шановні пані і панове!

Поглиблення співробітництва з Європейським Союзом і набуття членства в ЄС - об'єктивна необхідність для більшості з країн-членів нашої Організації.

У входженні в єдиний європейський простір - стратегічна мета й України.

У цьому контексті набуває особливої актуальності посилення взаємодії між Організацією Чорноморського економічного співробітництва та ЄС. Нам треба максимально синхронізувати свої дії з Євросоюзом, насамперед в економічній сфері, об'єднати зусилля, щоб не допустити появи на континенті нових розподільних ліній.

Значний потенціал такого співробітництва продемонструвала Балто-Чорноморська конференція, що відбулася у вересні ц.р. в Ялті.

Звідси ще один важливий напрям діяльності ОЧЕС - зміцнення співпраці з іншими європейськими регіонами, по осі як Північ-Південь, так і Схід-Захід.

Ми надаємо надзвичайно важливого значення розвитку транспортно-сполучення Балтика - Чорне море. Не менш перспективним проектом здається створення

транскавказького коридору, з'єднання його з західноєвропейськими та іншими транспортними артеріями.

Є підстави для висновку про значне зростання у нинішньому році обсягів торгівлі між країнами-членами ОЧЕС. Разом з тим, на мій погляд, екстенсивні шляхи нарощування торговельних обмінів практично вичерпано. Треба активніше запроваджувати нові підходи.

Потужного імпульсу розвитку співробітництва між державами ОЧЕС надало б створення у регіоні зони вільної торгівлі.

Більш узгоджених і активних зусиль потребує співпраця у сфері екології, подоланні наслідків природних і техногенних катастроф. Ми зобов'язані зберегти для нащадків унікальну і неповторну природу Причорномор'я, його багаті ресурси, пам'ятки історії та культури.

Вважаю, що для цього слід ширше використовувати можливості Чорноморського банку торгівлі та розвитку, недержавного сектору економіки.

Окремо хотів би зупинитися на участі ОЧЕС в реалізації Пакту стабільності для Південно-Східної Європи.

Наші держави зазнали значних збитків внаслідок подій у Косово. Постраждали й економічні зв'язки між ними.

Незважаючи на те, що ситуація на Балканах поступово нормалізується, втрати продовжують зростати.

Так, українські підприємства щомісяця втрачають мільйони доларів через припинення судноплавства по Дунаю.

Непокоїть зволікання з розчисткою фарватеру Дунаю, що може призвести до екологічної катастрофи.

Вважаю, що роль і участь ОЧЕС в реалізації Пакту стабільності мають бути значно активнішими. Це стосується насамперед такої масштабної і невідкладної проблеми, як відновлення наскрізного судноплавства по Дунаю.

Шановні пані і панове,

Приймаючи Декларацію Стамбульського саміту, ми засвідчуємо свою готовність докласти зусиль для забезпечення миру та стабільності в Європі, процвітання всіх країн-членів Організації.

Переконаний, що наша сьогоднішня зустріч, а також базові принципи Спільної декларації стануть вагомим внеском у розвиток дальшого співробітництва між країнами ОЧЕС на засадах відкритості, передбачуваності та взаємної вигоди.

Дякую за увагу.

**Mr President,
Honourable colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

First of all, allow me to extend my deep sympathy with kinsfolk and relations of the victims of the earthquake in Turkey of 12 November.

This country has suffered gruelling ordeal in recent months. Courage of the Turkish people and the leadership of the country holding two important summits under these stern conditions, deserve high appraisal and respect.

I would like to join the words of gratitude to the Right Honourable President Demirel for the initiative to hold this meeting. It is a good opportunity to discuss current cooperation in the BSEC framework, as well as to set priorities for the next millennium.

A little more than a year has passed since we signed the Charter of our Organisation. We can be pleased that it has become a full subject of international relations, an influential factor of regional development during this short period of time. This has been proved by granting the BSEC the status of an observer at the UN.

It also obviously influences global integrational processes. At the same time, our responsibility for the situation in the region, as well as in Europe grows.

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is an objective necessity for most of the BSEC member-states to deepen their cooperation with the European Union and to join to the EU.

Ukraine's strategic aim is also to enter unified European area.

In this context growing interaction between the BSEC and the EU acquires particular importance. We need to synchronize our activities with the European Union as much as possible, primarily in the economic field, as well as to join efforts to prevent new division lines on the continent.

The BSEC Conference held in Yalta last September demonstrated considerable potential of such cooperation.

Hence another important direction of BSEC activities - strengthening cooperation with other European regions along the North-South and East-West axes.

We attach particularly great importance to the development of transport connection between the Baltic and the Black Seas. Establishment of Trans-Caucasian corridor linked to West European and other transportation routes is yet another equally promising project.

There are reasons to draw a conclusion about considerable growth of the trade turnover between BSEC countries this year. However, in my opinion, extensive ways of increasing

trade exchanges have practically been exhausted. Active implementation of new approaches is required.

Creating a free trade zone in the region could provide a powerful impetus for the development of cooperation between the BSEC countries.

Cooperation in the sphere of ecology, as well as in overcoming the aftereffects of the natural and technogenous disasters require more active and concerted efforts. It is our duty to conserve and pass over to the future generations the unique and inimitable nature of the Black Sea area, its rich resources and historical and cultural monuments of the region.

I reckon that we should utilize the possibilities of the Black Sea Bank for Trade and Development and potential of the non-governmental sector of the economy.

I would like to particularly emphasize the BSEC participation in the implementation of the Stability Pact for the Southern and Eastern Europe.

Our countries have suffered considerable losses as a result of the developments in Kosovo. The economic links have suffered as well.

Despite the fact that the situation in the Balkans normalizes the losses continue to grow.

For instance, Ukrainian entrepreneurs lose millions of dollars every month because the navigation on the Danube is discontinued.

We are deeply concerned with lack of progress with regard to the Danube fairwater clearing, which could lead to an ecological disaster.

I think that the role and participation of the BSEC countries in the Stability Pact implementation should be more active. This primarily concerns an urgent and large-scale problem of restoring a through navigation on the Danube.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Adoption of the Istanbul Summit Declaration proves that we are ready to make every effort to secure peace and stability in Europe, as well as prosperity of all the member-states of the Organisation.

I am convinced that our today's meeting and basic principles of the Joint Declaration will make a considerable contribution to further development of cooperation between the BSEC countries on the grounds of openness, predictability and mutual advantage.

Thank you for attention.